

HONORING CHLOE CHANG OF PECK PLACE SCHOOL IN ORANGE, CONNECTICUT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 2021

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, each year the community of Orange, Connecticut gathers for a solemn ceremony to mark Memorial Day. As part of this ceremony, local elementary school students are invited to submit essays that share their thoughts on Memorial Day and its meaning to them. Submissions from each of the community's three elementary schools are selected to be included in the ceremony. I had the opportunity to join the Orange ceremony this year and was inspired by the words of this year's winners and am pleased to have this opportunity to share them.

Chloe Chang, a student at Peck Place School submitted the following essay:

We dress in red, white, and blue, attend parades, and honor the men and women who have fallen in the Civil War. This holiday has been around for 182 years, and we still donate money, coupons, and flowers to the perished soldiers. Their sacrifices have allowed them to serve their country, putting the welfare of others before their own. How can we repay them? We can give a moment of silence, visit their burial ground, and learn about their history.

The holiday started in 1868, where North America was fighting to end slavery, and South America was fighting to preserve slavery. The war to end slavery lasted for over 4 years, and Robert E. Lee finally capitulated the last Confederate Soldiers to General Ulysses S. Grant. "Decoration Day" was declared by General John A. Logan in 1868. In "Decoration Day", flowers are laid on war graves in honor of the deceased. Memorial Day holiday was declared a national holiday in 1971 to honor those who have died in all American wars.

The Union Army has contributed immensely to our lives, and the least we can do is say a little thank you. The invaluable changes they made upon our history is indescribable, and we are forever indebted to them. These brave men and women have done much for their fatherland by sacrificing their own lives, and we continue to honor them on May 31, Memorial Day.

For more than two hundred years American soldiers have answered the call to defend our land and our values of freedom and democracy. With annual ceremonies like the one in Orange, that engage our youngest citizens, we ensure that we will never forget that our armed forces have a long and proud history, and that every one of our veterans has demonstrated outstanding courage, dedication, and service. It is my honor to rise today to thank Chloe Chang for her very special contribution to Memorial Day and her community.

GREG DESTEFANO

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 2021

Mr. VAN DREW. Madam Speaker, I am here today to recognize Greg DeStafano, a resilient fighter who left an impact on all of those he ever met. Greg DeStefano was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor at the age of 10 and he defied the odds, living more than 30 years past the doctor's initial prognosis. Greg's family was by his side every step of the way, and they emphasize the fact that he left an impact on all of those he met with his huge smile and kind heart. Despite the multiple brain surgeries that Greg underwent, he graduated from high school and went on to attend a vocational high school for communications. After graduating, he traveled to Mexico to help children in need. Greg longed to help others, despite his own struggles. Greg passed away at the age of 42 this year, with his family by his side, like they always had been. On the day of Greg's memorial, \$13,000 had been donated in his honor to the Make a Wish New Jersey Foundation. One week following his passing, the total raised was over \$17,000. The impact Greg left not only on his family, but his community, is remarkable. God Bless Greg and his family and God Bless America.